

SN. 09/737,280

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. CANO:016

REMARKS

Claims 1-23, 47-65, 75, 76, and 78 remain pending in this application for which applicants seek reconsideration.

Amendment

Independent claims 1 and 47 have been amended to correct the language "defining respectively" to --corresponding respectively to-- to improve its form and readability. No new matter has been introduced.

Art Rejection

Claims 1-23, 47-65, 75, 76, and 78 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Nyffenegger (USP 5,826,869) alone or in view of Inoue (USP 5,159,546) and Applicants traverse these rejections because these references would not have taught controlling the feeding of insert sheets as set forth in independent claims 1, 47, 48, 57, 75, 76, and 78.

Claims 1, 47, 76, and 78 call for controlling the feeding of insert sheets among at least two sheet feeding modes, including a first sheet feeding mode in which the sheet feeding controller controls the feeders to sequentially feed the insert sheets from a different one of the inserter trays every time an insert sheet is fed, such as the S-STACKING MODE illustrated in Fig. 7A, and a second feeding mode in which the sheet feeding controller controls the feeders to sequentially feed the insert sheets from only one of the inserter trays unless the one inserter tray is empty, such as the F-STACKING MODE illustrated in Fig. 7B. By providing the plurality of sheet feeding modes, the sheet handling apparatus according to the present invention is capable of setting a plurality of sheet feeding modes as desired to thereby improve processing efficiency and operability.

In the S-stacking mode, the same pages of insert sheets are stacked on each inserter tray (see page 42, lines 18-21) so that different pages of inserter sheets are fed from a plurality of inserter trays. In the F-STACKING MODE, different pages of insert sheets are stacked on each inserter tray (see page 42, lines 23-26) so that the different pages of inserter sheets are fed from

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Claims 1, 47, 76, and 78 call for controlling the feeding of insert sheets among at least two sheet feeding modes, including a first sheet feeding mode in which the sheet feeding controller controls the feeders to sequentially feed the insert sheets from a different one of the inserter trays every time an insert sheet is fed, such as the S-STACKING MODE illustrated in Fig. 7A, and a second feeding mode in which the sheet feeding controller controls the feeders to sequentially feed the insert sheets from only one of the inserter trays unless the one inserter tray is empty, such as the F-STACKING MODE illustrated in Fig. 7B. By providing the plurality of sheet feeding modes, the sheet handling apparatus according to the present invention is capable of setting a plurality of sheet feeding modes as desired to thereby improve processing efficiency and operability.

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the same inserter tray.

Neither Inoue nor Nyffenegger teaches selecting inserter sheets from two different types of modes as set forth in claims 1, 47, 76, and 78. In this respect, the examiner alleges that Inoue discloses a plurality of sheet feeding manners, relying on 2006 of Fig. 30. In contrast to the examiner's understanding, element 2006 refers to different copying modes (i.e., single side and double side copying). Inoue also discloses different post processing (sorting and finishing) modes. The copying and post processing modes do not correspond to the insert sheet modes set forth in the claims. Inoue thus does not disclose or teach different modes of feeding insert sheets from the insert paper trays 2002. Nyffenegger also fails to disclose or teach feeding inserter sheets from an inserter or plurality of inserters, let alone feeding the same in different modes. As Inoue and Nyffenger fail to teach the inserter sheet feeding modes set forth in the claims, applicants submit that these claims patentably distinguish over Inoue and Nyffenegger.

Claims 48, 57, and 75 call for controlling the feeding of the insert sheets from an inserter tray in at least two stacking modes (such as illustrated in Figs. 7A and 7B), without interrupting a job being performed while reloading the insert sheets in the inserter tray. With the above control, continuous execution of jobs without interruption is possible. As previously explained, neither Inoue nor Nyffenegger teaches using different insert sheet feeding modes, let alone continuously executing a job even while reloading the insert sheets on the inserter tray. The examiner still fails to address this aspect of the invention. As Inoue and Nyffenegger fail to teach the claimed feature identified above, applicants submit that these claims also patentably distinguish over these references.


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Conclusion

Applicants submit that claims 1-23, 47-65, 75, 76, and 78 patentably distinguish over the applied references and are in condition for allowance. Should the examiner have any issues concerning this reply or any other outstanding issues remaining in this application, applicants urge the examiner to contact the undersigned to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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